(b) to (d) To provide better protection to the consumers and for speedy and inexpensive redressal for consumer grievances, the Government has brought into force the Consumer Protection Act, 1986. Several steps have been taken to ensure that the statutory institutions envisaged in the Act are set up on priority basis. In this connection, meetings have been held with the Food Ministers and senior officers of States/UT Administrations. The matter has been pursued vigorously through several letters, telexes, telegrams, etc. The Central Government is in process of setting up the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission. For this purpose, the appointment of the President of the National Commission has been made. Some States have already finalised actions for establishing the redressal machinery under the Act. The Central Government is very keen that the redressal machinery is made functional in States/UTs. For this purpose, the implementation of the Consumer Protection Act is being closely pursued, co-ordinated and monitored.

Representation from the Physically Handicapped

*357. SHRI M. A. BABY: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry have recently received any representation regarding the problems of the physically handicapped persons and if so, what are the details thereof; and

(b) what is the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WELFARE (DR. RAJENDRA KUMARI BAJPAI): (a) and (b) Representations from physically handicapped continue to be received in this Ministry and relate generally to problems regarding facilities for overcoming the disability, education, vocational training, employment, etc. The National Institutes are expected to function as apex organisations in their respective areas of disability. A Committee has been set up under the Chairmanship of Shri Babrul Islam, M.P., to suggest legislative measurts. Services and aids and appliances are arranged for the physically handicapped through voluntary organisations to supplement the efforts made by State Governments.

Promotion of Construction of Mud Houses by the HUDCO

*358. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) is promoting the construction of mud houses in the country;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) whether the HUDCO is exploring the possibilty of constructing mud houses in the urban areas also?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI): (a) to (c) Mud is a low cost building material, which has been traditionally used and is still being used in the construction of houses in different parts of the country, wherever it is easily available. HUDCO is promoting the adoption and use of low cost building materials and technologies for housing construction.

With a view to focussing attention on the use of mud as a low cost building material and the traditional construction methods with due upgradation and improvement, the HUDCO had organised an International Conference on 'Mud Architecture' in Trivandrum in November, 1987, in collaboration with other agencies concerned, followed by a Symposium in New Delhi.

HUDCO has recently sanctioned loan assistance to one urban housing scheme for the housing of weavers in Maheshwar (Madhva Pradesh), wherein the walls of houses to be constructed with low cost technology will be of compact mud blocks stabilised with lime. HUDOC will also a providing two mud-compacting machines for use in this housing project and subsequently in other project.